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California Postsecondary Education Commission
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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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California State University San Bernardino – Ontario-Montclair School District partnership receives \$991,404 to address achievement gap

SACRAMENTO — December 5, 2008 — California State University, San Bernardino, in partnership with the Ontario-Montclair School District and the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve elementary school teaching in the core content area of mathematics. The partnership has been awarded a four-year Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) grant of \$991,404 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

The Algebraic Learning in Elementary Grades: Results, Independence, Achievement (ALEGRIA) project will serve all teachers at Vineyard Elementary School, a K-8 school whose students are primarily English language learners. Vineyard Elementary is converting to a science–technology–mathematics magnet school serving a community that is overwhelmingly socio-economically disadvantaged. The school’s 31 teachers will increase their content knowledge of mathematics and enhance their teaching skills for algebra and algebra readiness.

Commission Chair Olivia K. Singh said, “The grant plays an important role in making sure every student has the opportunity to learn from a highly qualified teacher. The teachers who participate will learn new techniques to address the needs of students and help them become lifelong learners.”

It is hoped this project will increase the ability of students to meet the challenge of the state’s new requirement that all 8th graders take Algebra I. The grant is part of the federal ITQ program, funded through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide high quality professional development for current teachers.

Over the past two decades, the Commission has awarded more than 200 grants totaling \$110 million to improve teacher quality. The 2008 grants, totaling \$5.8 million, address California’s achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, or language. The grants improve classroom strategies in core subjects. The grants require rigorous evaluation to demonstrate how professional development affects student achievement.

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“While the professional development provided by the grants is vital, the evaluation requirement is especially important,” the Commission’s Executive Director Murray J. Haberman said. “Being required to demonstrate the impact of professional development on student success, not just on teacher practice, supports the Commission’s commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

More information may be found online at

<http://www.cpec.ca.gov/federalprograms/teacherquality.asp>.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission’s primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.